

What is Claimed is:

1. A document processing system, comprising:
 - a document transport;
 - a transport controller for directing the operation of the document transport, the transport controller being operative to sense exceptions and to generate operator messages in response to the exceptions;
 - a transmitter interface for receiving operator messages from the transport controller and wirelessly transmitting the messages; and
 - an operator control unit for wirelessly receiving operator messages from the transmitter interface and visually displaying the messages for an operator, the control unit being operative to receive operator commands and transmit the operator commands to the transport.
2. The system of claim 1 wherein the operator control unit is operative to receive a broadcast from the transport advising that the transport is available and to allow selection of the transport, the operator control unit being further operative to exchange authenticating information with the transport to establish a communication session with the transport.
3. The system of claim 2 wherein the transport creates a session identifier upon establishing a communication session with the operator control unit.
4. The system of claim 3 wherein the transport and the operator control unit include the session identifier in all messages exchanged during the communication session.
5. The system of claim 4 wherein the transport controller issues operator messages during operation of the transport and wherein all operator messages issued by the transport controller are directed both to a local display and the operator display unit.

6. The system of claim 5 wherein the transmitter interface transmits the messages using omnidirectional RF communication.
7. The system of claim 6 further comprising a plurality of additional transports and a plurality of additional operator control units operating within radio frequency of one another.
8. The system of claim 7 wherein each of the transport broadcasts an availability message when not engaged in a communication session with a control unit, the availability message including a unique identifier.
9. The system of claim 8 wherein each of the operator control units receives all availability messages when not engaged in a communication session with a transport and wherein each of the operator control units generates a display listing all available transports to allow the operator to select a desired transport with which to request a communication session.
10. The system of claim 9 wherein each of the transports broadcasts an availability message while engaged in a session with a control unit whenever the transport is available to engage in an additional session with a different control unit.
11. The system of claim 10 wherein each of the transports communicates with a transmitter server operative to control the transmitter interface and wherein the transmitter server processes all messages generated by each transport for transmission using the transmitter interface and directs messages received from each control unit to the correct transport.

12. The system of claim 11 wherein the transport controller communicates with the server over a local area network.

13. A method of document transport control comprising the steps of:
 establishing a communication session between the transport and a handheld operator control unit;
 transmitting status messages from the transport to the control unit; and
 transmitting commands from the control unit to the transport.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein the step of establishing a communication session between the transport and a handheld operator control unit comprises:
 broadcasting an availability message from the transport;
 receiving the availability message at the control unit;
 transmitting a session request from the control unit to the transport;
 transferring authentication information between the transport and the control unit; and
 creating a session identifier for use in communication during the session.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein a plurality of transports and control units operate in the vicinity of one another, each transport is operative to broadcast an availability message when not engaged in a communication session and each control unit is operative to receive the availability messages and to create a display listing all available transports to allow selection by an operator of a desired transport.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein the transports and operator control units are operative to communicate using omnidirectional RF communication.

[illegible]